WINTER WEATHER TERMINOLOGY

During the winter months **specific terminology** is used to communicate weather information. Knowledge of these National Weather Service terms is the first step in understanding and being prepared for winter weather. **These terms could save your life!**

Winter Weather Message: Segmented product issued every few hours giving details and explanations on winter weather warnings, watches, advisories, cancellations and safety information.

...WATCHES AND WARNINGS...

Winter Storm Watch: Severe winter weather is **possible** in the affected area. May include; snow storm, ice storm, blizzard, dangerous wind chills, or a combination of events. Issued 12 to 48 hours in advance.

Winter Storm Warning: Significant, possibly life-threatening, severe winter weather will occur, or is about to begin. For example: Snowfall of 6 inches in 12 hours and/or 8 inches in 24 hours, a mix of snow and freezing rain/sleet. Issued within 12 hours of conditions.

Blizzard Warning: Wind at least 35 mph with falling or blowing snow reducing visibility to under 1/4 mile for at least three hours.

High Wind Warning: Wind gusts above 57 mph or sustained winds at 40 mph or higher, for at least an hour.

Ice Storm Warning: Heavy ice accumulation will cause dangerous and damaging situations, such as downed utility lines and icy roads.

Wind Chill Warning: Wind Chill values colder than 25 below zero.
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ADVISORIES

Winter Weather Advisory: Any combination of winter events that cause significant inconvenience, but probably **not** life-threatening when caution is exercised. For example; 1-5 inches of snow, light sleet or freezing drizzle, some blowing and/or drifting snow etc.

Snow Advisory: New snowfall of 1 to 5 inches is expected.

Wind Advisory: Sustained winds over 30 mph, and/or gusts under 57 mph.

Wind Chill Advisory: Wind chills of 15 below to 25 below zero.

Freezing Drizzle Advisory: Light ice coating on roads and highways, but no damage is expected to trees/power lines.

Blowing Snow Advisory: Wind-driven snow reducing visibility to 1/4 mile or less.

Dense Fog Advisory: Widespread fog with visibility under 1/4 mile.

WINTER WEATHER AWARENESS DAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2002